

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel Hubbard Bell, May 3, 1901, with transcript, with transcript

ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL TO MABEL (Hubbard) BELL 1831 Connecticut Avenue, Washington, D. C. May 3rd, 1901 My darling little wife:

I miss you awfully — and don't know how to get along without you at all. You seem so far away — and it is so heart-rending to find no sign in cable or letters that you have received my letters. It is only now that I have received any assurance that you have heard from me since you left Paris — an age ago.

I telegraphed you that I was troubled about my father — he has something on his mind and is acting in the same mysterious way he did just before his announcement to us of his intention of marrying. Without consulting me or any one he is stripping himself of his property . He is giving everything away right and left — under the plea that he would rather give away his property than bequeath it. This is all very well in its way but does he not excec to live ? — and what provision is he making for his wife?

It is all very well to make permanent disposal of the capital but he cannot afford to do without the income. He has given Elsie, stocks and bonds that yield — Bert says — about \$1500 per annum. He said he has given Daisy an equal amount. Aileen says he has given her property yielding about \$250 per annum — and Bobbie Ker an equal amount. Then Balf Ker and others have also received valuable gifts — I don't know how much. I tried to find out the other day whether 2 Mrs. Bell knew of this — she told me that she did know that he had made some disposition but did not know the details. He had given her the same he gave to Elsie. He says nothing to me on all these matters and I cannot make him talk about it. I asked him what income he had left to live upon. He said he had reserved about \$3000. This is all I have heard. I cannot rest satisfied with this condition of affairs — and must somehow or other make an examination of his affairs to be sure that he has

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enough to live upon and that his wife is to be properly provided for. There is something wrong and I cannot get at the bottom of it — I wish you were here to help me. So far as I can judge they are living very happily together and Mrs. Bell is just as good and kind as she can be and devotes herself to my father's well-being. Still I must confess to an under-current of uneasiness without any definite cause.

I am arranging to take a cottage at Atlantic City for a month and have my father and his wife and Bert and Elsie stay with me there. Bert and I can carry on our work there almost as well as if in Washington. I certainly cannot leave at this time. The Census Office has not yet completed the mailing of circulars and I cannot leave until the next step has been commenced and is well under way.

I wish you could come here — if only for a short time to see how matters are for I cannot write everything 3 that I have in mind. I could go abroad with you or up to Baddeck — or anywhere if you thought best after the early part of June when the Census Office has taken up the work of “Editing the Schedules” — In the autumn my work would begin again with the examination of the Tables and the preparation of a Report.

There is another reason why I wish you could come soon. Elsie has undoubtedly written to you of her condition, but you do not know that she has been threatened with a miscarriage. She has been kept in bed for the last two or three days — and feels perfectly well. The doctor says she had a very narrow escape and must be kept very quiet for a few days more. Of course I cannot write to you of this through Miss Safford — nor could I telegraph you fully. I sent you a cable however, telling you I thought you had better come home so as to be nearer Elsie. She is so careless of herself that I wish very much you could be here. Dr. Sowers wishes her to remain quietly in bed for at least one week — and thinks it will do her good to go down to Atlantic City after that.

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Bert and I will take our work with us. We cannot consider Baddeck until June or July. Best I can do for all I think is to make headquarters at Atlantic City for the present. All well — I love you my darling — will write more fully of other matters through Miss Safford.

Your loving, Alec.